

INQUIRY ORDERED ON MAIL SECURITY

Over £1m. haul by rail red signal gang

LONDON NIGHT HUNT IN CAFES & CLUBS

A FULL-SCALE inquiry into security in Royal Mail trains was ordered last night by Mr. Bevens, Postmaster-General. This followed yesterday's mailbag robbery, with an estimated haul of well over £1m., near Cheddington, Bucks.

Mr. Bevens interrupted a holiday at his Liverpool home to return to London after an armed gang ambushed a "travelling Post Office" train from Glasgow to Euston. He said that the possibility that it was an "inside job" could not be ruled out.

The Post Office offered a reward of £10,000 for information leading to the thieves. A City firm of loss adjusters, acting for the National Provincial and British Linen Banks, offered £25,000.

MASKED MEN HANDCUFF DRIVERS

The thieves, all masked, stopped the train by faking a signal to show red. They separated the first two coaches from the other 10 and forced the driver, whom they cuffed and handcuffed to his co-driver, to take the locomotive and the two vans along the line to a point where accomplices were waiting.

They threw the mailbags over a bridge into a narrow road. There the bags were loaded into a lorry. The robbery the biggest-ever in Britain, was all over in about 20 minutes.

Last night police all over Britain were hunting the gang. In London Flying Squad men combed cafes and clubs.

Pictures—P18; GPO Not Main Losers—Back Page; Editorial Comment—P12.

SPLIT-SECOND TIMING

From GUY RAIS
 CHEDDINGTON, Bucks., Thursday.
A WORN brown glove and four large torch batteries were all the equipment used by a gang who ambushed a GPO mail train near here early to-day and carried out the biggest and most audacious train robbery in British history.

Late last night Det. Supt. Fawcett, head of Bucks C.I.D., described the amount taken as "clearly well over £1m."

The gang, armed and masked with balaclavas and scarves and believed to number between eight and 15, operated with split-second timing. They tampered with a long-distance signal.

Set another automatic signal on the main line between Leighton Buzzard and Cheddington stations at red.

Stopped the train, known as the Travelling Post Office, split it in two and after copping the driver and handcuffing him to the co-driver.

Escaped with about 120 mailbags containing over £1 million.

£35,000 REWARD OFFERS
 Minister breaks holiday
 The GPO described the loss as "very heavy indeed" and said "it may well run into seven figures."

Mr. Bevens, the Postmaster-General, who interrupted a holiday at his home in Liverpool to fly to

Banks' Losses
 Among the approximate losses caused by the robbery, two were estimated last night as follows:

NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK: More than £500,000.
BRITISH LINEN BANK: A subsidiary of Barclays: About £35,000.

London to confer with senior officials, offered a reward of £10,000 for information.
 Hart & Co., loss adjusters, of Lawrence Lane, City, offered another reward of £25,000. This was on the instructions of the National Provincial Bank and the British Linen Bank, of Edinburgh.

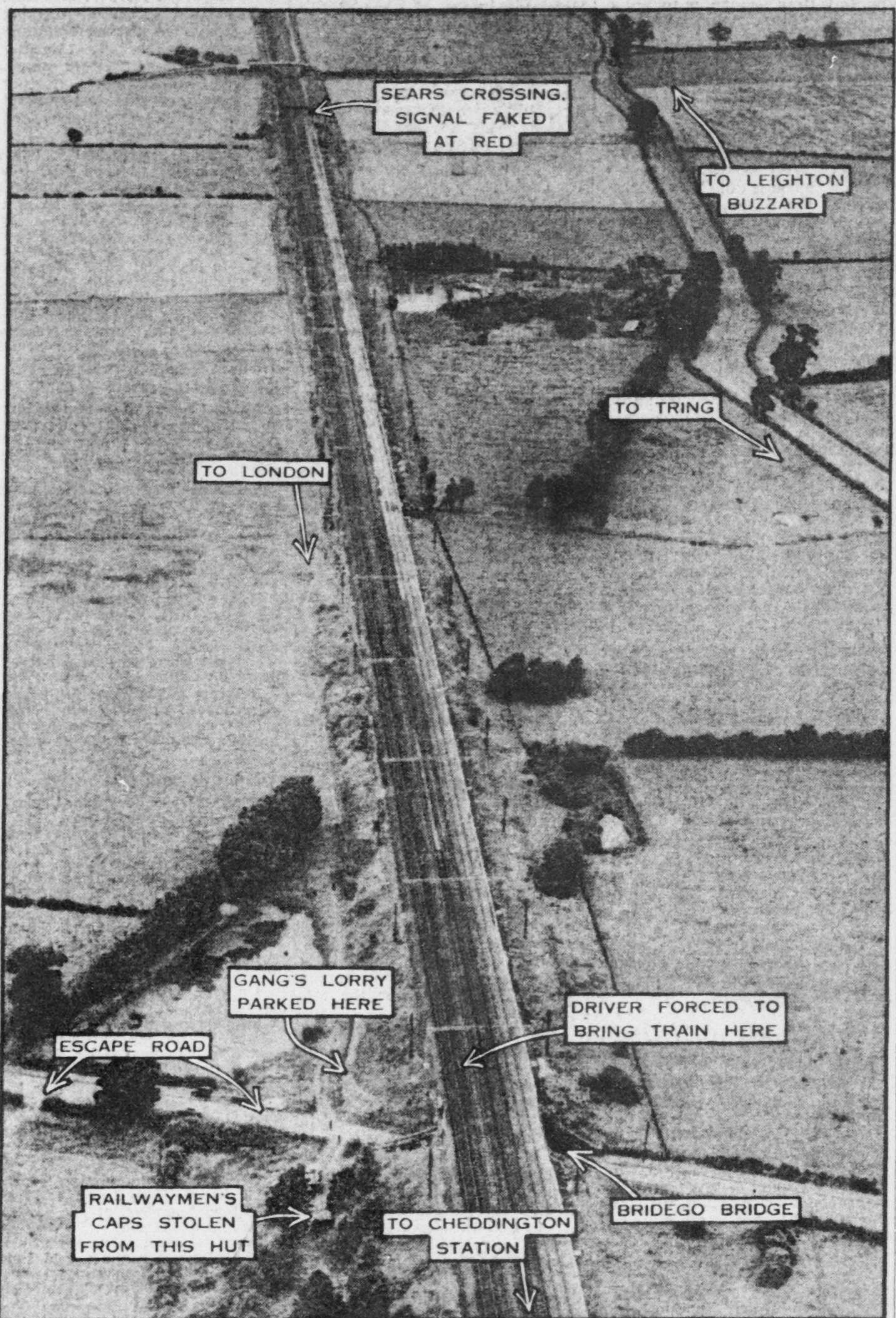
AMBER SIGNAL
 Brakes applied
 The Great Train Robbery began at about 3.10 this morning as the Post Office train, which left Glasgow at 6.50 the previous night for London, had just passed Leighton Buzzard station.

Jack Mills, 58, of Newdigate Street, Crew, the driver, gently applied the brakes in the cab of his 2,000 hp diesel-electric locomotive No. D326, as he passed an amber signal. This was the first signal the gang tampered with.

As the 12-coach train approached lonely Sears Crossing, about two miles from Cheddington station, Mills saw the signal set at red against him. It was this signal which, two minutes before, had been changed from green to red by some of the gang.

The theft was not discovered until about 10 a.m. yesterday. No one in the house had heard anything suspicious during the night.

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 4)



The scene of the greatest mail train robbery. The stretch of line between Sears Crossing and Bridego Bridge, Bucks, where a gang ambushed an express and made off with over £1 million. [Aerial picture by Anthony Marshall; other pictures—P18.]

PRINCE SAILS COURSE TWICE

From J. E. A. FROST.
 Daily Telegraph Special Correspondent
 COWES, Thursday.

A COURSE being raced at Cowes by Prince Philip and Mr. Uffa Fox was shortened because of boisterous weather to-day but with other Flying Fifteens they failed to notice this and went round the seven miles a second time.

Prince Philip, in Coweslip, had been second over the line at the finish. Heavy going caused a number of retirements, disqualifications and minor accidents.

FASTNET ARRIVAL
 After a strenuous day's racing in the Royal Yacht Squadron Regatta several hundred yachtsmen got down to the task of preparing their handicap yachts for the biennial Fastnet race starting on Saturday.

The Count of Barcelona, who will be at the helm of his yacht Giralda in the race, arrived to-day. To-night the Royal Yacht Squadron annual dance was held on the platform of Cowes Castle.

Ian Proctor—P9.
 Special Article—P11.

RUSSIAN SHIPS OFF SCILLIES

Daily Telegraph Reporter
 Two Russian warships, a cruiser of the Sverdlov class of 15,450 tons and a destroyer of the Kotlin class of 2,850 tons, and a tanker were anchored about three miles off St. Mary's, Isles of Scilly, last night. They were outside territorial waters.

In the evening, a reconnaissance plane from Coastal Command made several flights around the island.

HOLED LINER
 From Our Special Correspondent
 VIGO, Thursday.

The Royal Mail liner, Amazon, 20,368 tons, which was holed in collision with a pier here on voyage, is expected to resume its voyage to Lisbon at noon tomorrow. Firemen finished pumping out thousands of gallons of water to-night.

CARDINAL ILL
 The health of Cardinal Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, is rather poor, according to reports from Budapest reaching Vienna yesterday. The Cardinal is said to have asthma and diabetes.—Reuter.

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BALMORAL HOLIDAY
 The Prince of Wales, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Viscount Linley left Euston last night for Balmoral where they will spend their summer holiday.
 Picture—P21

WAR OVER, SAY EGYPTIANS
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 By Our Diplomatic Staff
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 Whether or not Egypt means to withdraw her troops, she would undoubtedly be glad to save the cost of involvement in the Yemen. As Eric Downton, DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT, reported yesterday, Egypt is facing her worst financial crisis since the revolution 11 years ago.
500 Prisoners Claim—Back Page

PURGED CZECH REHABILITATED
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 He was one of the Czechoslovak Communist leaders to be rehabilitated in the course of a general review of sentences imposed in the purges of 1950 to 1954. Some Communists, including Dr. Cepicka, son-in-law of President Gottwald, have been expelled from the Communist party for their part in the purges.
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 Racing—P8

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 Weather Maps, Reports—P10

PREMIER READY TO JOIN IN "USEFUL" SUMMIT

TESTS PACT IS FIRST STEP
 FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 HELSINKI, Thursday.

MR. MACMILLAN, who is visiting Finland after the signing of the Moscow test-ban treaty, said in a Helsinki television interview to-day that the treaty was "only the first step on a long journey."

"I remember discussing the test ban problem with Mr. Khrushchev as far back as 1959 and we made little progress. We have been patient, and I think it is satisfactory that we have made this first step.

"War has become impossible as an instrument of policy. Retaliation would be so great that neither side could accept it. Nuclear war is out."

Of his personal participation in a new summit meeting Mr. Macmillan said that it was thought useful to have a summit meeting by those concerned, of course I would join in it.

"But it is important that any such talks should be well-prepared and that they should move successfully from one point to another. What is most important is to get agreement.

"And if a summit meeting is a good means for this, then we should use it. The main thing is to get agreement."

IDEOLOGICAL GAP
 Tensions reduced
 Asked if he thought the present détente was only temporary, Mr. Macmillan replied: "Of course it would be absurd to think the gap between the ideology of the Communist world and our own free systems can be bridged by a military détente. Nevertheless tensions have been reduced.

Answering a question on a non-aggression pact between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, he said: "We have undertaken to discuss this with our allies."

Premier's Holiday—P13
 Pact Submitted to U.S. Senate and India Leads Moscow Signing—P20

SALARY RISE AT LLOYDS BANK
 Daily Telegraph Reporter
 About 23,000 of Lloyds Bank staff are to get a 31 per cent. salary increase back-dated to April 1, a bank official confirmed last night.

All non-clerical and clerical staff, managers and the board of management will be included. Branches will be informed of the details by post this morning.

Other banks are expected to follow with similar increases. Midland Bank staff have already been given a rise this year.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS—P22

THREE DROWNED WHILE FISHING
 Three youths fishing from converted seaplane float of Haverigg Point, Cumberland, drowned when the float capsized. They were: Graham Jenkins, 19; Leslie Pattinson, 14; James Griffiths, 20, of Millom, Dennis Ball, 18, of Millom, saved by coastguards.

KENNEDY BABY
 (See This Page)
 Boston, Thursday.—Doctors decided to keep President Kennedy's baby son in high-pressure chamber overnight. At special briefing late to-night Mr. Salinger said baby "continues to show improvement in respiration and oxygen input." Two medical teams would work all night in shifts inside chamber. "What is being done here has never been done before."—Reuter & BUP.

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500 Prisoners Claim—Back Page

WALES HERALD IS FIRST FOR 600 YEARS

Appointment on eve of Royal visit
 THE Queen has approved the appointment of Major Francis Jones to be Wales Herald Extraordinary. It was announced from Buckingham Palace last night. The announcement was made on the eve of the two-day visit by the Queen and Prince Philip to North Wales.

This appointment creates a new and permanent office of Wales Herald Extraordinary. The first Wales Herald was created about 1395 by Richard II.

There was no Prince of Wales at that time and the King presumably intended that the office should be, in due course, attached to the Prince's household. That never happened, however, and the office was allowed to lapse.

Major Jones is county archivist of Carmarthenshire and is well known for his work on Welsh heraldry and genealogy. He was given the honorary degree of Master of Arts by the University of Wales for his studies of Welsh History in 1956.

Heralds in Ordinary who receive an honorarium of £25 a year, are those whose number and titles were fixed by the Charter of 1555 which incorporated the College of Arms. Heralds Extraordinary who receive no payments are additional to this number and have been created from time to time for a particular occasion.

London Day by Day—P12

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 Weather Maps, Reports—P10

SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT IN KENNEDY BABY

SPECIALISTS USE HUGE BREATHING DEVICE
 FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT
 NEW YORK, Thursday.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY telephoned his wife from the Children's Medical Centre in Boston this evening and told her their day-old baby was "slightly improved." It was the day's first optimistic report from the doctors.

Earlier it had been reported that Patrick Bouvier Kennedy, the 4lb 10oz child born five and a half weeks prematurely yesterday, was encountering increasing difficulty in his struggle for life.

He is being treated in an incubator for a respiratory ailment which is often fatal in premature babies. The President, who has dropped all but the most pressing business to be near his wife and third child, flew by helicopter to the Children's Medical Centre this afternoon.

The baby was transferred there yesterday by ambulance from the hospital at Otis Air Force base on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where he was born by Caesarean section.

After the President had entered the Centre and conferred with doctors, Mr. Salinger, his Press secretary, announced that tests would be made to study "oxygen problems" in the baby's lungs. Mr. Kennedy will await the result of the tests at his hotel in Boston.

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NET SALES OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH for the month of July, 1963, was:
1,310,042 COPIES DAILY
 As certified by Messrs. Saltery, Sons and Co., Chartered Accountants, in accordance with the formula prepared by a Committee of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association.

This figure is an increase of 44,545 on July of last year and is a new record in the history of the paper.

POTHOLES UP AFTER RECORD ATTEMPT
 From Our SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 GRENOBLE, Thursday.

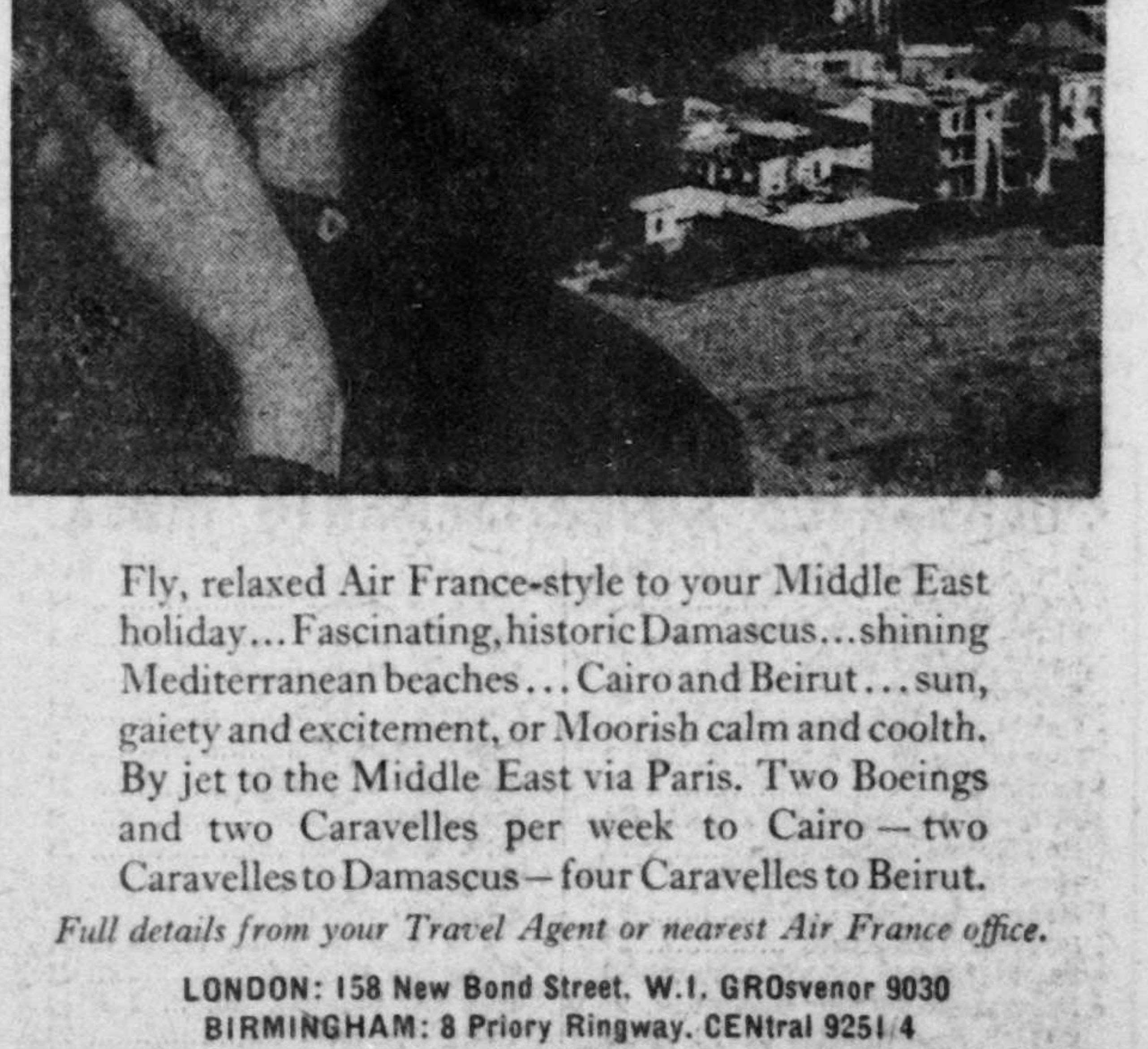
THREE of the 20 British potholers, who have been in the Berger Cave near Grenoble for the last 10 days, emerged from the cave to-night. They are Stephen Wynn-Roberts, 25, of Bristol, Geoffrey Lee, 24, and Robert Toogood.

The three men said the other 17 members of the group would come up to-morrow. They added that they did not know whether they had beaten the world record descent of 3,681ft set up in 1956 by M. Berger.

The 17 still underground were about 150 yards from the exit at a point known as the Puits Garby. They were passing the night there because they were very tired.

DARTMOOR MAN HITS WARDER
 A Dartmoor warder, G. Jones, was attacked by a prisoner at the gate last night. He was treated in the prison hospital and sent home to his doctor.

It happened as the prisoner was allowed out of his cell. The prisoner was overpowered and taken to the punishment block.



AIR FRANCE
 THE WORLD'S LARGEST AIRLINE

"Inquiry Ordered on Mail Security." Daily Telegraph, 9 Aug. 1963, p. [1]. The Telegraph Historical Archive, link.gale.com/apps/doc/IO0704214938/DSLAB?u=webdemo&sid=bookmark-DSLAB. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.