

PUNCH GOES TO WAR 1939-1945

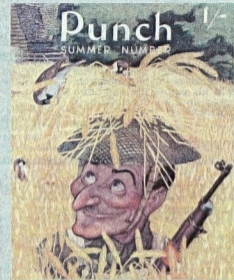
(Prion £25)

LADIES and, if I may use the abbreviation, gents Rid your mind of these grave political events, They mostly mean Hitler's knees are knocking, So hang up your troubles with your Christmas stocking.

THIS atrocious piece of doggerel comes from a funny, poignant collection of cartoons, articles, poems and drawings, introduced by Griff Rhys Jones and dating from a time when Mr Punch was in his heyday.

For a population which had limited access to information, Punch was a way of lifting spirits and maintaining a sense of proportion.

The great cartoonists, such as Fougasse, Pont and the Pooch Illustrator E.H. Shepard, between them created an image of the British in wartime: the man rather vague and innocent but rising



to the challenge, and the woman elegant and long-suffering, frankly the superior sex.

The collection includes Images of the Home Guards, Land Girls, identity cards, warnings to be reticent and the foibles of politicians and London socialites.

Hitler, who begins as a comic figure, ends as a scarecrow dangling shockingly from a lamppost.

As the War ends, two weary soldiers trudge through a ravaged landscape and exclaim: 'The old place hasn't changed a bit from 1917!'